GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
STEEL
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3428
ANSWERED ON:14.08.2001
SAFETY NORMS AT SHIP BREAKING YARDS
SUBODH ROY

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether safety norms are ignored at ship breaking yards and the workers are exposed to occupational hazards and living conditions;

(b) whether according to a study, India has become a dumping ground for somebody else`s wastes and the pollution caused by ship-breaking activity near Bhavnagar has attained alarming proportions; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to check these malpractices?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY)

(a) No, Sir. The State Government of Gujarat has taken a number of steps like training of workers on safety measures, launching of risk awareness campaigns, monitoring of safety status at each plot etc. to improve safety of workers.

(b) A study by Greenpeace suggests that India has become a dumping ground for shipboard waste and pollution caused by shipbreaking activity has reached alarming levels. However, various other studies undertaken by Gujarat Ecological Society and MECON show that the effect in the environment is not so adverse.

(c) The steps taken by the Government in this regard are as under:

i) Ministry of Environment and Forests have constituted an Advisory Committee to advice on the aspects pertaining to the regulation of ship breaking for sound environmental planning and management including proper handling of hazardous waste;

ii) Environmental guidelines on ship breaking industry have been prepared by the Central Pollution Control Board and circulated to the concerned State Pollution Control Boards for implementation. A regular monitoring mechanism is in place.

iii) The State Government of Gujarat has notified a regulation called Gujarat Maritime Board (Prevention of fire and accidents for safety and welfare of workers and protection of environment during ship breaking activities) Regulations 2000 under Gujarat Maritime Board Act, 1981. As per new Regulations, the ship breakers need to enter into a license agreement for shipbreaking activities, beaching and cutting permission and compliance of environmental safety measures and house keeping.

iv) Shipbreaking activity is controlled within the provisions of various Acts and Rules namely, Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; Hazardous Wastes Rules, 1989 as amended 2000; MSIHC Rules 1989, Factories Act, 1948 etc. Central Pollution Control Board Gujarat Pollution Control Board and Ministry of Environment and Forests monitor the level of pollution at the Shipbreaking yards from time to time.

v) The Gujarat Maritime Board has awarded the consultancy work for scientific management of solid waste generated during shipbreaking activity. The scope of work includes waste quantification, characterization, design of treatment & disposal facilities and post project monitoring.